

تعالى الله الرحمن عن الجسم والمكان

# *The Transcendence of Allah* جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ

*A detailed research work on the concept of Allah  
being free from space, body, and directions.*

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تَعَالَى اللَّهُ الرَّحْمَنُ عَنِ الْجِسْمِ وَالْمَكَانِ

# The Transcendence of Allah ﷻ

A detailed research work on the concept of Allah being free from  
space, body, and directions.

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Dedicated to:

My Mother

*Umm e Bilal Attariya*

Ala Hazrat

*Imam Ahmed Raza Khan*

My mentor

*Mufti Faizan ul Mustafa*

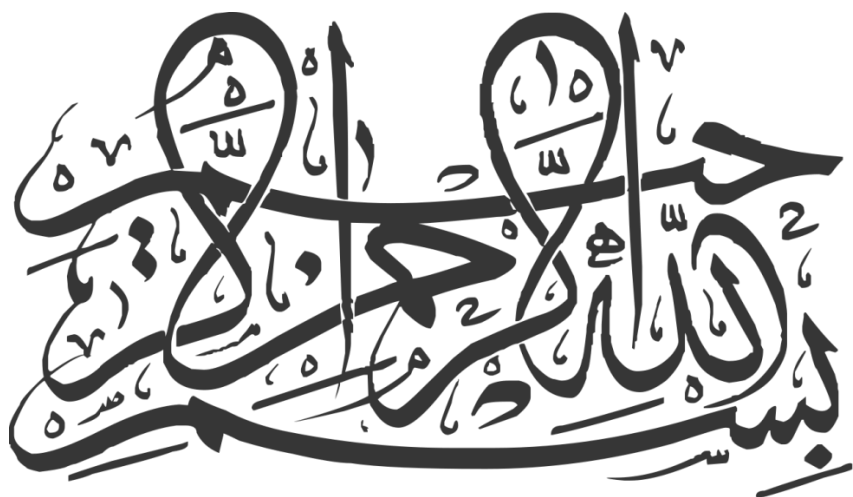
*Qadri*

My Murshid

*Shaykh Ilyas Attar Qadri*

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## Preface (مقدمة)

الحمد لله الذي سبحانه وتعالى عن الجسم والجهة والمكان وكل شئ مما شأنه الوهابية المجسسية الضالون الاغبياء.

والصلوة والسلام على محمد سيد رسله والانبياء.

اما بعد: فإذا كان فتنة المبتدعين مُنتشِرا في كل جانبٍ يعني هم يقولون ان الله له الجسم والمكان. وهو مستقر على العرش. فَضَّلَ الاغبياء بحمل الآيات المتشابهة على ظاهرة. وزل قدموه لأن يثبتون المكان والجسم لله تعالى بآيات الإستواء.

ونحن نعتقد ان الله منزّه ومبزأ عن كل ذلك الحوادث. ونحن نطلب منه بوسيلة النبي المكرم ﷺ ان يرزقنا توفيقا ليتم هذا الكلام في رد المجسسية.

All praises be to Allah the one who is transcendent and beyond the limitations of body, direction, location, and all the other things which the ignorant and stupid *Mujasamiya Wahabiya* falsely attributed him with.

Peace, Salutations and blessings be upon Sayyiduna Muhammad, the master of his Messengers.

As we know the Fitna of deviants was widespread everywhere since they believed in Allah having a body and location. They also believed that he ﷻ is established on Arsh. These foolish ones went astray by applying the Mutashabih verses on the the apparent meaning. Their feet slipped as they tried to prove a location and body for Allah ﷻ by the Ayah of Istiwa. However, we believe that Allah is free from all of these things which are considered creations. We ask him to give us power to finish this book in the rejection of the *Mujasamiya* sect by the *waseela* of the most Honorable Prophet ﷺ.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

## Two types of Ayah in the Quran

There are two types of Ayahs in the Quran, Muhkam (محکم) and Mutashabih (متشابه). The Muhkam (محکم) Ayahs are the ones in which the meaning is clear. Whatever is mentioned in these Ayahs is the intended meaning. For example, the Ayahs which talk about the exaltedness of Allah and him being incomparable (بے مثل) are considered to be Muhkam (محکم). Such as the Quranic Ayah (55/3): 'خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ', i.e. 'He ﷻ created the Human', is Muhkam (محکم), since the apparent context is the intended meaning. However, there are some Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs too. These are the ones which are not understood clearly, they are the ones in which the apparent context is not the meaning of Allah ﷻ. One example of this is, "الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى", meaning "The most merciful did Istiwa upon the Arsh (Holy Throne)". We will discuss in detail how this Ayah is Mutashabih (متشابه). But before that we need to understand that the Muhkam (محکم) Ayahs are the roots of Quran. Therefore, they will be considered the basis for our entire belief system. Now if we come across a Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayah, we need to correspond it to the Muhkam (محکم) Ayah. We cannot take the apparent meaning of the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayah and propagate that belief. The only people that do this are the ones who have malice in their hearts and their purpose is to cause chaos and Fitna (فتنة) in the Ummah. The worst thing a person can do is spread *Fitna* in the



community, as Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Quran (2/191):  
 “وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ”, i.e. “And *Fitna* is more severe than Murder.”

Nevertheless, Allah says in Surah Aal e Imran, Ayah 7:

*He is the one that revealed the book upon you; in it are Muhkam verses which are the basis of the book, and the others are Mutashabih. Thus, as for those, in whose hearts is immorality, they follow whatever is undefined from it, seeking trouble and seeking its interpretation. And no one knows its interpretation except Allah. And those who are experts in knowledge say ‘we believe in it’. It is entirely from our lord. And no one heeds except the people of understanding.*

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ  
 آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ  
 وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي  
 قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ  
 مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ  
 تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ  
 وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ  
 آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا  
 يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

The point of interest is underlined i.e. “except Allah. And those who are experts in knowledge”. If we assume there is a break between the sentences and end the sentence at the word “*Allah*” and consider a new sentence from “*And those who are experts*”, then it would be clear that only Allah knows the meaning of it, ‘*And those who are experts in knowledge say ‘we believe in it’*’. However, if we do not assume a break between the sentences and consider it to be a conjunction, which is known as Ma’tuf (معطوف) in Arabic

Grammar, now the sentence would look like this: “except Allah and those who are experts in knowledge”. This way, it would mean that Allah and the experts both know the interpretation of these Ayahs.

However, Imam Hakim in his Mustadrak mentions a narration from Hazrat Ibn Abbas that he was reading it as: “الا الله و يقول الراسخون في العلم”. We can see that there is a word “يقول” between Allah and راسخون. We know that there cannot be anything between the conjunctions (معطوف عليه and معطوف). Therefore, it is proven that in the Ayah, “والرّاسخون” is a new sentence and is not a conjunction with the word “Allah”. This means that it is only Allah who knows the interpretation of these Ayahs. Though, this Hadith is not متواتر (mass-transmitted), but it is from صحيح اسناد (sound chain) and can be used as a proof at least to solve this issue.

This Ayah actually dispraises those who go after finding the meaning of the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs, and praises the people who handover the knowledge of it to Allah. This praise is the same as the one in the beginning of Surah Baqarah about the people who believe in unseen—غيب. The basic point is that Allah ﷻ likes those people who believe without seeing or knowing. Since this is the utmost level of submission, that one believes in something that came to the people from their lord without seeing or knowing what it is, those who believe in غيب (without

seeing), and who believe in the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs, are praised by Allah in the Quran.

Furthermore, Imam Jalal ud Deen Al-Suyuti mentions a Hadith that the Apostle of Allah ﷺ mentioned:

*"Indeed the Quran did not descend for some of it to falsify the other. So whatever you understand from it, act upon it, and whatever is unclear, then just believe in it."*<sup>1</sup>

"إن القرآن لم ينزل ليكذب بعضه بعضاً، فما عرفتم منه فاعملوا به، وما تشابه فآمنوا به"

This Hadith clearly tells us that we are ordered to act upon the Muhkam (محكم) Ayahs since the intended meaning of it is known, and we are told to just believe in the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs, since we do not know what Allah meant by them. Therefore, it is not a good idea to try to find the meaning and act according to our understanding.

One important point we have to remember is that Allah has divided the Ayahs into Muhkam (محكم) and Mutashabih (متشابه). He informed us about the Muhkam (محكم) that they are the "أمر الكتاب", the basis of the book, and that is because the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs have recourse to them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Itqan, Dar ul Kutub Arabia, p. 477-480

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

This means that whenever someone sees an Ayah which has an incomprehensive meaning, then instead of applying the apparent meaning and considering that to be the intended meaning of Allah, he should cross-check it with the Muhkam (محكم). If it corresponds, then that is the intended meaning, if it goes against the Muhkam (محكم), then that means that the apparent meaning is not intended, and the Ayah is Mutashabih (متشابه). If that is the case, then we should just handover the knowledge of it to Allah, submit to him, and just believe in it. وسنبين تفصيلها إن شاء الله, and we will mention the examples and details of this towards the end of this work Allah willing.

Imam Al-Suyuti mentions a narration from Bukhari in Al Dur Al Manthoor:

*"When you see the people who are going after what is unclear from it (the Quran), then avoid them, those are the ones that Allah has mentioned (here in the Ayah)."*

"فَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ  
فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ سَيَّأَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْذَرُوهُمْ"

Imam Qurtubi mentions a narration from Sayyiduna Jabir bin Abdullah, under the commentary of this Ayah, he states:

*"The Muhkamat from the Ayahs of Quran are those whose interpretation is known and whose meaning and explanation is understood. The Mutashabih are those about which no one has any*

"المحكمات من آي القرآن ما عَرِفَ  
تأويله وفهم معناه وتفسيره.  
والمتشابه ما لم يكن لأحد إلى علمه

way to know what because of what Allah possesses exclusively with his knowledge, not his creation” سبيل مما أستاذ الله تعالى بعلمه دون خلقه

He mentions the example of these as the الحروف المقطعات (disjoint letters) in the beginning of some Surahs. Nobody knows the meaning of those except Allah.

Imam Ahmed Al-Saawi says in his Hashiya Jalalayn under the same Ayah (3/7):

“Indeed a Christian delegation said to Nabi ﷺ, ‘Do you not say that Isa is the spirit of Allah and his word?’ Nabi ﷺ replied “Yes (we do).” They said “Great” i.e. this suffices us in terms of Sayiduna Isa being the son of Allah. Then this Ayah was revealed...And his saying “Spirit of Allah and his word” are from the Mutashabih, whose meaning is not recognized and whose interpretation is not understood. Rather, the meaning of it is that he is a spirit from Allah, i.e. from his Nur. And as for ‘his word’, the meaning of it is that Allah said to him ‘Be, so he became (came into existence)’. Thus, he is a servant from the totality of servants; Allah distinguished him by giving him Messengerhood.”

“أن وفد نجران قالوا للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ألسنت تقول إن عيسى روح الله وكتبته؟ فقال نعم، فقالوا حسناً أي يكفيننا ذلك في كونه ابن الله، فنزلت الآية...، وقوله روح الله وكتبته من المتشابهة الذي لا يعرفون معناه ولا يفهمون تأويله، بل معنى ذلك أنه روح من الله أي نوره وكتبته بمعنى أنه قال له كن فكان، فهو عبد من جملة العباد مميزة الله بالنبوة والرسالة.”

Along with all this, we see a narration that tells us about a person who was called Sabeegh. He came to Madina tul Munawwara and asked people around for the meaning of these Ayahs. Upon getting to know this, Sayyiduna Farooq e Azam punished him severely and wrote a letter to Sayyiduna Abu Moosa Al Ashari that nobody from the Muslims should be in his company.<sup>3</sup>

### **Why was it revealed if it is incomprehensive?**

The Scholars say that just like the body is tested and tried by imposing the عبادات on it. The human intellect is tried by these Ayahs. Also, it is known that when a philosopher writes a book he puts some code words in it, so that it becomes a place for the submission of student to his teacher. For, continuity of knowledge will make a person prideful and then it will cause rebellion. Therefore, to stop this knowledge at some point, these Ayahs were revealed. In other words, they are a place of submission of the intellect to its Creator and yielding to him fully.<sup>4</sup>

### **Two opinions of Scholars**

The majority of the people of Ahl us Sunnah chose the method of Tafweed (تفويض) which is to hand over the meaning and the interpretation of these Ayahs to Allah. They say that they will not explain these Ayahs but they will glorify and sanctify Allah, and hand over the matter of knowledge to him only. This was

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 479

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 480

the opinion of the traditional Ulama of Islam. Another group of Scholars from Ahl us Sunnah chose the method of Taweel (تأويل). These were the latter era Scholars who said that they will interpret these Ayahs upon what is appropriate for Allah. Thus, they cross-check the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs with the Muhkam ones, and they interpret a meaning that does not go against the Muhkam (محکم) or the necessary beliefs of the Deen (ضروریات الدین).

Another opinion is mentioned by Imam Ibn Daqeeq - that if the interpretation is appropriate according to the Arabic Language, then we don't deny it. If it is far from it, then we just stop and leave the matter to Allah. However, we believe in it as it is, accepting whatever the intended meaning maybe, and glorify Allah with it.

The main reason to interpret these Ayahs is so that the laymen do not get confused. Usually, it is experienced that when one tells a laymen that we do not know the meaning of this Ayah and you have to believe it as is, then that misguides them and they lose trust in the scholars. By telling them to go on the path of تفویض (handing over), they tend to distance themselves from the Deen. That is why the Scholars chose to interpret these Ayahs to bring people closer to the message of Quran and its understanding.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, Allah ﷻ has stated in the Quran (42/11):

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<sup>5</sup> Fatawa Razawiyya, Markaz e Ahlesunnat Gujrat, Vol 29, p. 124

“لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ”, meaning, ‘There is nothing like him.’ This Ayah is Muhkam as mentioned by Imam Fakhr ud Deen Al-Raazi that:

*The Scholars of Tawhid have derived proofs from this Ayah. They denied Allah ﷻ being a body composed of limbs and parts, and also that he does not have a place (مكان) and direction (جهة). They said that had He been a body, it would be just like the other bodies, which will necessitate examples and similarities with Him, and that is rejected explicitly by the Ayah: ‘There is nothing like him.’*

احتج علماء التوحيد... بهذه الآية في نفي كونه تعالى جسماً مركباً من الأعضاء والأجزاء وحاصلاً في المكان والجهة، وقالوا لو كان جسماً لكان مثلاً لسائر الأجسام، فيلزم حصول الأمثال والأشباه له، وذلك باطل بصريح قوله تعالى: {لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ}

Now after looking at this Muhkam Ayah if we see an Ayah that is Mutashabih (متشابه), such as the Ayah: “الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى”, meaning “The most merciful did Istiwa upon the Arsh (Holy Throne)” (20/5), we cannot consider the apparent meaning of this Ayah to be the intended meaning. The word Istiwa (استواء) actually means to sit or settle firmly somewhere. Many people wrongly have translated this Ayah this way: “*The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established.*” Or “*the All Merciful settled on the throne.*” However, the Reviver of Islam in the 14<sup>th</sup> century AH Imam Ahmed Raza Khan رحمه الرحمن, showing us the correct way of translation, translated it this way:



*'The extremely merciful, who did Istiwa on Arsh, however it was suitable for him.'* "وہ بڑی مہر والا اس نے عرش پر استواء فرمایا جیسا اس کی شان کے لائق ہے"

We can clearly see that Imam Ahmed Raza chose the way of تفویض (handover), he did not interpret the word "Istiwa", and he just handed over the knowledge. However, other well-known commentators of the Quran accorded it with the Muhkam (محکم).

Since we know through the Muhkam (محکم), Allah is not like anything else in this world - he does not have a body, nor does he have a direction. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to say that he got settled or established on his throne as sitting somewhere will require a body, and Allah is beyond this. Furthermore, this interpretation will cause contradiction with the other abovementioned Muhkam (محکم) of the Quran. Thus, they interpret Istiwa as اسیلاء, which means to dominate or to possess over something.

There are many reasons for this interpretation. Firstly, it is well known that Allah is the owner/possessor of worlds, paradise, hell, and every other creation. The Arsh is mentioned specifically because it is bigger than other creations and is one of the wonders of Allah, which is why he mentioned it in this Ayah. Another reason is that people use this expression for a king in their everyday language. They say such and such king is sitting on the throne. This does not literally mean sitting, it means that he is the king that is in power, and this is the meaning which is

similar to استيلاء. That is why the other commentators, who chose to interpret it, interpreted it this way.

After this entire discussion, if we see someone deriving proofs from this Ayah that Allah ﷻ has a body, place and/or a direction, we have to consider him a deviant. This false creed has been dwelling in minds of people for centuries now. Our great scholars have successfully exposed this misguidance and presented the truth to the Muslim Ummah. We will now discuss a major deviant who had these opinions.

# Chapter 2

Shaykh ul Mujasamiya

Ibn Taimya

In the middle of 7<sup>th</sup> century A.H. an individual named Taqi Al Deen Ibn Taimya was born. With many controversial verdicts and baseless creeds, he was one of the people in the front row that made it their utmost goal to misguide the Muslim Ummah. We will not go in detail regarding his misguided verdicts. However, we will talk about the flaws in his writing regarding the creed about Allah ﷻ which lead to deviance.

The first thing we would like to discuss is how he attributed a direction with Allah, he said:

*The majority of our pious predecessors had the opinion that Allah is above the universe. Though none of them explicitly used the word “direction”, they believe it with their hearts and said explicitly that their lord is above them.*

وجهور الخلف على أن الله فوق  
العالم، وإن كان أحدهم لا يلفظ  
الجهة فهم يعتقدون بقلوبهم و  
يقولون بألسنتهم ربهم فوق<sup>6</sup>

This misguided person twisted the words of our pious predecessors to support his own creed. If the pious predecessor did not explicitly use the word “direction” for Allah, then how can anyone else? It is totally baseless to say Allah is in the upper direction from the universe. The meaning of their words is in terms of status, as in Allah is above everyone else in terms of status, not in terms of direction.

### **His belief in Allah ﷻ having a body**

Nevertheless, talking about the concept of Allah being a body, he says:

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<sup>6</sup> Minhaj Al Sunnah Al Nabawiyya, Dar ul Kutub Al Ilmia, p. 378

*Sometimes the intended meaning of “body” is whatever can be pointed to, or whatever can be seen, or whatever has some attributes established with it. (With that being established, we know that) Allah ﷻ will be seen in the hereafter, there are attributes established with him, and the people point towards him at the time of supplication with their hands, their hearts, their faces, and their eyes.*

*However, if someone says “he is not a body” and rejects the above-mentioned interpretation of it, then he will be replied to by saying: The interpretation you try to deny by this method is such an interpretation that is proven by authentic reports and explicit reasoning, and you have not presented any evidence to deny it.*

وقد يراد بالجسم ما يشار إليه أو ما يُرى أو ما تقوم به الصفات، والله تعالى يُرى في الآخرة وتقوم به الصفات ويشير إليه الناس عند الدعاء بأيديهم وقلوبهم ووجوههم وأعينهم، فإن أراد بقوله: ليس بجسم هذا المعنى قيل له: هذا المعنى الذي قصدت نفيه بهذا اللفظ معنى ثابت بصحيح المنقول وصريح المعقول، وأنت لم تقدم دليلاً على نفيه<sup>7</sup>

### **Does Allah move?**

He also says:

*Undoubtedly, we claim that indeed Allah moves. Also, the creations and accidental qualities are established with him. So what is the proof for rejecting our claim?*

فإننا نقول إنه يتحرك وتقوم به الحوادث والأعراض فما الدليل على بطلان قولنا؟<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore he said:

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 259

<sup>8</sup> Ibid p. 300

*Indeed the Hayy (the ever-living) and the Qayyum (self-sustaining) does whatever He wants, moves when He wants, descends when He wants, raises when He wants, He constricts whenever He wants, He expands whenever He wants, He stands whenever He wants, and He sits whenever He wants. This is because the only distinguishing trait between the living and the dead is movement. Every living thing will move no matter what, and every deceased will not move no matter what.*

أن الحي القيوم يفعل ما يشاء ويتحرك  
إذا شاء ويهبط ويرتفع إذا شاء ويقبض  
ويبسط ويقوم ويجلس إذا شاء، لأن  
أمازة ما بين الحي والبيت التحرك، كل  
حي متحرك لا محالة، وكل ميت غير  
متحرك لا محالة<sup>9</sup>

### Our reply

This is a major fallacy by Ibn Taimya. He did not understand the difference between Creator and creation. He did not differentiate between حي—Hayy, and الحي—Al-Hayy. Hayy is the one whose life is given to him by someone else. The Al-Hayy is the one who has a life of His own. It does not depend on any creator, or any reason. The one who is Al-Hayy does not need a sign of life in order to be proven alive. Some counter arguments from us would be that if you say that the distinguishing factor between living and dead is movement, then what will you say about breathing? What will you say about growing, what about eating food and other things related to it? Isn't that the same case? Every being that breathes, grows, eats, etc. is living, and every dead thing does not perform these acts. Will you also say Allah is breathing, eating, and growing etc. معاذ الله? Another question is that, movement and immobility are creations of Allah. For every creation,

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p. 260

there was a time when that creation was not present which is known as *ازل*—Pre-eternity. It is a known fact by the consensus of Muslims and Theological Imams that it was only Allah who was present in pre-eternity, nothing else. Then did Allah also move, sit, stand, descend, rise etc. as well? How can that be possible? For, all of these concepts are creations of Allah. Therefore, if there were no creations present in pre-eternity, then it is imperative to believe that Allah is free from having all of these creations established with him.

Furthermore, he said in his Tafseer under Surah Alaq:

*Indeed his Arsh and his Kursi encompass the Skies and the Earth. Undoubtedly, He is sitting on it.* إِنَّ عَرْشَهُ أَوْ كُرْسِيِّهِ وَسِعَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ، وَإِنَّهُ يُجْلِسُ عَلَيْهِ<sup>10</sup>

We ask the same question again. The Arsh and Kursi are creations of Allah. If you say Allah was sitting on it since pre-eternity, then this will be shirk, as you proved there was someone else other than Allah since then. If you say he was not sitting on it since pre-eternity and He sat on it after creating it, then that will cause variation in His Divine being, which is invalid. For, whoever has changes in his being cannot be God. More details regarding this will be discussed in the next chapters.

### **Another False claim**

Discussing another misconception from him that the Sharia does not talk about this creed, we see his words:

*As for the Sharia, it is well-known that it is not narrated from anyone from the Messengers, their* وَأَمَّا الشَّرْعُ فَمَعْلُومٌ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَنْقُلْ عَنْ أَحَدٍ

<sup>10</sup> Tafseer Kabere li Ibn Taimiya, DKI publishers, v6, p 317

*companions, their successors, or any Imams of the Ummah that Allah has a body, or Allah is not a body. Therefore, rejecting this claim or proving this claim is an innovation in the Sharia.*

من الأنبياء ولا الصحابة ولا التابعين ولا  
سلف الأمة أن الله جسم أو أن الله ليس  
بجسم، بل النفي والإثبات بدعة في  
الشرع<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore he said:

*Neither Quran, nor the narrations of his messenger, nor the sayings of any pious predecessor of this Ummah say that Allah ﷻ is not a body. Therefore, it is misguidance and ignorance to reject a meaning that is proven by Sharia and intellect by words which are not supported by Sharia and intellect.*

وليس في كتاب الله ولا سنة رسوله ولا قول  
أحد من سلف الأمة وأئمتها أنه ليس  
بجسم... فنفي المعاني الثابتة بالشرع  
والعقل بنفي ألفاظ لم ينف معناها شرع  
ولا عقل جهل وضلال<sup>12</sup>

However, we found a contradiction in his work, when he said:

*And the Ahl us Sunnah said regarding the Ayah: "The most merciful who did Istiwa on Arsh", that the action of Istiwa from Allah upon his glorious Arsh is not a metaphor, rather it is a literal meaning.*

وقال أهل السنة في قوله: ((الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى  
الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى)) : الاستواء من الله على  
عرشه المجيد على الحقيقة لا على  
المجاز<sup>13</sup>

First he said that we cannot establish any concept regarding Allah having a body, as it is an innovation. But here he indirectly tried to

<sup>11</sup> Sharh Hadith Al Nuzool, Dar Al Asima, pg 390

<sup>12</sup> Bayan Talbees Al Jahamiya, Al Mamlaka Al Arabiya Al Saudia Publisher, p. 373

<sup>13</sup> Sharh Hadith Al Nuzool, Dar Al Asima, pg 390



prove the concept of Allah having a body. As we discussed, the literal meaning of Istiwa is to sit down or get established upon something. For someone to sit on something, he has to have a body, otherwise it will not mean Istiwa literally, and it would be metaphorical. Since Ibn Taimya said Istiwa is on its literal meaning here, he indirectly claimed that Allah has a body. We will talk more about Istiwa and its meaning in the upcoming chapters. Also, we will discuss if the Sharia says anything regarding this creed. **إن شاء الله عز وجل**

*And Allah is free from all the defects that ignorant people attach with him.*

# Chapter 3

The opinion of Theological  
Imams

In this section we will go over some of the texts of our great Scholars to show that Allah ﷻ is beyond body, place, and direction.

It is stated in **Al-Bidaya Fi Usool il Deen**:

*Then the creator of the universe, it is impossible for him to be a body, an atom, one with a shape, in a direction, or in a place. (All of these things are impossible).*

"ثم صانع العالم يستحيل ان يكون  
جسماً او جوهر او ذا صورة، او في جهة،  
او في مكان"

Then the author explains why this is impossible.

*This is because there are signs of creation in all of these. For, indeed the body is compiled, and every compiled thing has possibility of separation.*

لأن فيه امارات الحدث، فإن الجسم  
مجتمع، وكل مجتمع يجوز افتراقه

The definition of body is that it will be composed of parts. If someone believes that Allah ﷻ has a body, then that will mean that he believes that he ﷻ is made up of parts. Anything that is made up of parts can be split up into pieces. Therefore, if someone believes that God is a body and he is made up of parts, then it will mean He is split-able, and since He is split-able then it will mean each and every part is God. This will lead to Shirk, as one will believe in more than 1 God if he follows this.

Other than this, we hear many people say that “Allah is everywhere”, the author rejects this ideology and says:

*The saying of the one who says that he ﷻ is everywhere is invalid. For, Tamakkun (being established in a position/place) makes it impossible for Him to be in two places at the same time. Therefore, the one for whom Tamakkun is impossible, then how can it be imagined that he is in all places?*

وقول من قال: إنه في كل مكان،  
افسد. لان المتمكن يستحيل ان  
يكون في مكانين في حالة واحدة. فمن  
استحال عليه تمكن، كيف يتصور ان  
يكون في الاماكن كلها<sup>14</sup>.

It is stated in **Al Nibras**:

*He ﷻ is not a body, since it is a combination of atoms. Nor is He Mutahayyiz, i.e. occupying some space. All of that are signs of*

"ولا جسم لانه مركب من الجواهر  
الفردة، و متحيز ثابت في الحيز أي

<sup>14</sup> Al Bidayah Fi Usool il Deen, Manshoorat Al Jaml, p. 51-54

*creations. For, the combination is dependent on its parts, and a Mutahayyiz is dependent on its space, and the dependency is something that is specific to creation (not the creator).*

المكان. و ذلك امانة الحدوث، لأن المركب محتاج إلى اجزائه، والمتحيز محتاج الى حيزه، والإحتياج من خواص الممكن<sup>15</sup>.

Hence, it is proved that Allah ﷻ is not a body (جسم) nor does He occupy space (متحيز). Since all of these things have a limit and dependency. God, The Exalted Almighty ﷻ, cannot have any limitations or dependencies. That goes against His attribute of being God. Therefore, attributing body or space for Him ﷻ is grave deviance.

It further states:

*He does not do Tammakun (occupy space) in any place. For, the Tamakkun is defined as implementation of dimensions in something else which is called: Makaan (space). Then, the dimension is defined as 'something encompassing, which is established with the body'. Allah ﷻ is beyond encompassing and quantity, since this will necessitate splitting.*

ولا يتمكن في المكان لان التمكن عبارة عن نفوذ بعد في آخر...يسمونه المكان، والبعد عبارة عن امتداد قائم بالجسم... والله منزّه عن الامتداد والمقدار، لإستلزامه التجزئ<sup>16</sup> [هذا هو المتن فقط]

<sup>15</sup> Al Nibras, Maktaba Al Bushra p. 177

<sup>16</sup> Ibid p. 184

This text goes into the very basic concept of occupying space. When something occupies space, it means that dimensions are implemented around him, meaning that he is limited to the dimensions. This encompassing can only be with a body, which is why Allah ﷻ is beyond this since it will necessitate splitting. The reason for the necessitation of splitting is explained in the next part:

*As for the proof rejecting Tahayyuz (occupying space): It is that if he occupied space, then either He did so since pre-eternity or not, If He did, then that will necessitate the pre-eternal nature of the space as well. If He did not, then He will be considered a place where created things manifest. Another proof is that he will be either equal to the space or less than it. In this case, He will be limited. Other than that, if someone says He is more than the space, then He will be considered split-able.*

و اما دليل على عدم التحيز: فهو أنه لو تحيز. فإما في الأزل. فيلزم قدم الحيز. أو لا. فيكون محلاً للحوادث. و ايضاً إما أن يساوي الحيز او ينقص عنه. فيكون متناهياً. او يزيد عليه. فيكون متجزياً<sup>17</sup>

This is the best proof that rejects the idea of Allah ﷻ occupying the space. It is an obvious fact that Allah ﷻ existed before anything else, which is known as “قدم”, i.e. pre-eternity. That is when he was the only one present and nothing else. If one believes that he occupies space, then there are two situations.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p 185

Either that space was there since pre-eternity, or not. If it was not there in pre-eternity, then where was Allah at that time? If someone believes that the space was there too at that time, then it will mean there are two entities which are pre-eternal. This will cause *Shirk*, as pre-eternity is the attribute of God only. Once it's proven that the space is a creation, and was not there since pre-eternity, then if one believes that he is in that space, it will mean he is a place where created things manifest, and anything that is a site of creation cannot be God either. This belief will lead to negating Allah ﷻ as being God معاذ الله. Therefore, this is how it is proven that Allah ﷻ is beyond having place and body.

The second proof mentioned by the book, is that if He is considered to be occupying space, then either He will be equal to the space or less. This will mean that He is limited to that space. Anyone that is limited cannot be God, since no one can prove any limitations for Him ﷻ. Also, if someone thinks that He is bigger than the space, then that will mean that a part of Him is inside the space and a part of Him is outside the space, and He can hypothetically accept splitting. Once splitting is acceptable, then that will mean the parts that remain after the split should be God. As we already established that had God been made up of parts, each and every single part would be considered God. Similarly, in this situation, in a hypothetical split, the part that is inside the space, and the one that is outside the space, both will be considered God. This belief will lead to *Shirk* as well, since our belief is that Allah ﷻ is unique and all by Himself.

Furthermore, it is stated in Al-Musamarah:

*He almighty, is not an atom that occupies space. Otherwise, He will definitely be either moving in his place, or stationary. Both of these things are creations. Whatever is not free from (being a site of) creations, is also a creation.*

Then it says:

*He Almighty is not a body i.e. that is compiled from singular atoms that are its parts which cannot be split. Rejection of the claim of Him being an atom is sufficient enough to reject him being a figure. For, when the concept of him being a specific atom in a space is rejected, then the concept Him having a figure is also rejected. Since every figure is limited to its space, and is compiled from atoms. The atom along with what being a body contains have the requirement of creations, such as having composition, quantity, combination, and separation. All of these concepts contradict*

"أنه تعالى ليس بجوهر يتحيز وإلا لكان متحركاً في حيزه أو ساكناً وهما حادثان وما لا يخلو عن الحوادث فهو حادث" <sup>18</sup>.

"أنه تعالى ليس بجسم و الجسم هو المؤلف من جواهر فردة وهي الأجزاء التي لا تتجزأ وإبطال كونه جوهرًا... يستقل به أي بإبطال كونه جسماً لأنه إذا بطل كونه جوهرًا مخصوصاً بتحيز بطل كونه جسماً لأن كل جسم فهو مختص بتحيز و مركب من جوهر، وجوهر مع ما في الجسمية من زيادة لوازم تقتضي الحدود كالهيئة والمقدار والاجتماع والإفتراق. فإن كل منهما ينافي الوجود

<sup>18</sup> Al-Musamarah, D.K.I. Publishers, p. 37



*the idea of exaltedness as they require dependency.*

الذاتي لإقتضائها الإحتياج<sup>19</sup>

This clearly tells us that the idea of someone being exalted, someone who is a creator, cannot correspond with the idea of him having a composition, quantity, accepting combination or separation. Therefore, we have to believe that Allah ﷻ is beyond having a body or place.

Now, the author goes into the discussion of the word “استوى” in the Quran. As we discussed, apparently this world indicates to the concept that Allah ﷻ has a place and a body. Many deviants took this concept and propagated it. But the author says:

*He did Istiwa on the Arsh (Holy Throne)... Indeed the Karramiya sect determined the upper direction for him without proving Him being established on the Arsh. Another similar sect explicitly said that He is established on the Arsh. They derived proof from the Ayah of Istiwa...Every word that appeared in the Sharia attributed to the Lord Almighty or applied as a name or attribute for him while opposing the intellect, then that is called Mutashabih (متشابه). The criticisms on the Ayah of*

"استوى على العرش...إن الكرامية يثبتون جهة العلو من غير استقرار على العرش والحشوية وهم المجسمة يصرحون بالإستقرار على العرش وتمسكوا بظواهرها قولاً تعالى: الرحمن على العرش استوى...كل لفظ يرد في الشرع مما يسند إلى الذات المقدسة أو يطلق اسماً أو صفة لها وهو مخالف للعقل ويسمى المتشابه...فقد

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 38-39

*Istiwa have already been answered, that indeed we believe that Allah ﷻ did Istiwa on the Arsh, along with the ruling that it was not like the Istiwa of some bodies on other bodies, i.e. Tammakun (occupying space), touching, or being level with the place.*

اجيب عن آية الاستواء بأننا نؤمن بأنه استوى  
على العرش مع الحكم بأنه ليس كاستواء  
الأجسام على الأجسام من التمكن والتماسة  
والمحاذاة<sup>20</sup>.

As already mentioned, this means that Allah ﷻ did Istiwa on the Arsh. We do not know what it is or how was it done, but the author of this book clearly mentioned that for creation, when the word Istiwa is used, it means one body being on top of another body, or one body occupying space, or one body touching the other body, or it being equal to the other body in size. But that is for creation, we cannot use this for the creator as it will cause many problems in creed as we discussed before. Therefore, it is imperative for everyone to believe that Allah ﷻ is free from limitations of body and space.

After mentioning the opinions of our honorable Imams of theology, we would like to discuss some opinions of the revered commentators of the Quran.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p.44,45

# Chapter 4

The opinion of Quranic  
Commentators

After providing the proofs from the scholars of creed (الأئمة المتكلمين), we will now go over the discussions of the commentators of the Holy Quran. This section will portray the commentary they mentioned regarding the word استوى in different Ayahs of the Quran.

We will start off by mentioning the opinion of Imam of Commentators of Quran, **Imam Al-Tabari**. He mentions in his Tafseer under the Ayah (2/29):

(This is) the discussion about his ﷺ saying: "Then he did Istiwa towards the sky and made it seven heavens". Abu Ja'far said: there is a difference of opinion regarding this saying. Some people said that the meaning of Istiwa is to have attention towards it... Other people said that Istiwa means being exalted.

القول في تأويل قوله تعالى: {ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ}. قال أبو جعفر: اختلف في تأويل قوله: {ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ} فقال بعضهم: معنى استوى إلى السماء، أقبل عليها... وقال بعضهم: الاستواء: هو العلو

Imam Al-Tabari mainly provided interpretations regarding the word Istiwa for this Ayah. Then wherever the word Istiwa occurs next time in the Quran he says (under 20/5):

We already mentioned the meaning of Istiwa with its proofs in what passed, and we mentioned the differences of opinion in it. So that is not bound to be repeated here in this place.

وقد بينا معنى الاستواء بشواهد فيما مضى وذكرنا اختلاف المختلفين فيه فأغنى ذلك عن إعادته في هذا الموضع

This clearly shows us that Imam Al-Tabari had the opinion of these

Ayahs to be from the Mutashabih (متشابه) ones, and he did not apply it to the apparent meaning. Only the deviants take proof from this and claim Allah ﷻ to have a body and space. However, Allah ﷻ is beyond whatever they criticize him with.

The great Imam of Ahl-us-Sunnah, **Abu Mansoor Al-Maturidi** says in his Tafseer Taweelat u Ahl il Sunnah under the Ayah (7/54):

*"The most merciful did Istiwa on Arsh.' It is what the (deviant) people of resemblance considered to mean that there is a place for him. Everything that is attributed to a place in terms occupying space and being established in it, it is attributed as being dependent towards that. Allah is beyond that. Moreover, (if we follow this claim then) He will be either equal to the place, or bigger than it, then He will definitely be equal to it in terms of greatness, or He will be less than it. Allah is beyond the transformations and changes, since they are the signs of creation, and they denote some coming into existence after it did not exist, and there is no real power except by Allah ﷻ."*

{الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى} [طه]:  
[5] هو ما فهمه أهل التشبيه من  
مكان... كل منسوب إلى مكان من جهة  
التبكين فيه والقرار، منسوب إلى  
استعانة وحاجة منه إليه، جل الله عن  
ذلك، وعلى أنه إما أن يكون مثله أو  
أعظم منه، لكان له عديلاً بالعظمة أو  
دونه... يتعالى عن الاستحالة  
والتغير: "إذ هو أثر الحدث، وأمرة  
الكون، بعد أن لم يكن، ولا قوة إلا  
بالله

This was the opinion of Imam Al-Maturidi, who also rejected the idea of Allah being established in a place.

Then, it is mentioned in **Tafseer of Imam Qurtubi** under the Ayah (2/29):

*This Ayah is from the Mushkilaat (complex). In this Ayah, and in whatever is similar to it, the people have three opinions. (First opinion is that) some people said: 'We recite it, we believe in it, but we will not explain it'. This is the opinion that was chosen by a big number of Scholars. This is what was narrated from Imam Malik (May Allah have mercy on him), that a man asked him about the Ayah of Istirwa, and Imam Malik replied, 'the Istirwa is known, but the state of it is not understandable, believing in it is compulsory, and asking about it is a sinful innovation. And I see you as a malicious man', and then Imam Malik kicked him out. (Nevertheless, the second opinion is that) some people said: 'We will recite it, and we will explain it in a way that suits the apparent aspect of the language. This is the opinion of the deviant sect called Mushabbahah. (The third opinion is that) some of them said: 'We will recite it and we will explain it, but we will not apply it on the apparent meaning'*

وهذه الآية من المشكلات، والناس فيها وفيها شاكلها على ثلاثة أوجه، قال بعضهم: نقرأها ونؤمن بها ولا نفserها؛ وذهب إليه كثير من الأئمة، وهذا كما روي عن مالك رحمه الله أن رجلاً سأله عن قوله تعالى: {الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى} [طه: 5] قال مالك: الاستواء غير مجهول، والكيف غير معقول، والإيمان به واجب، والسؤال عنه بدعة. وأراك رجل سوء! أخرجوه. وقال بعضهم: نقرأها ونفسرها على ما يحتمله ظاهر اللغة. وهذا قول المشبهة. وقال بعضهم: نقرأها ونتأولها ونُحيل حملها على ظاهرها

This means that the first and third opinions mentioned by Imam Qurtubi are the ones which are acceptable by the Scholars. For, we got

to know the opinion of Imam Malik as well in the case of explaining the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs. However, the second opinion is the one that has problems. The deviants hold this opinion and apply the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs on their apparent meaning, which is clearly not the intended meaning as it goes against the Muhkam (محكم) Ayahs. Using the word استوى from the Quran to prove the body and place for Allah is utter stupidity and clear misguidance. Nevertheless, Imam Qurtubi further mentions under the Ayah (7/54):

*Most of the early and latter-era Scholars have the opinion that when the Creator Almighty is free from direction and space, then He is not in the upper direction.*

والأكثر من المتقدمين والمتأخرين أنه إذا  
وجب تنزيه الباري سبحانه عن الجهة  
والتحيز... فليس بجهة فوق عندهم؛

Explaining the reason, he says:

*This is because, when someone is specified with a direction, then he will be in a space. The one that is occupying the space, it is necessary for him to be moving, stationary, changing, and being created (all of this is not appropriate to say about Allah ﷻ). This is the opinion of the Scholars. Imam Malik said: The Istiwa is known i.e. according to the language. However, the modality is unknown, and asking about it is a sinful innovation. A similar thing was said by Sayyidatuna Umm Salma. (And to know) this much is*

لأنه يلزم من ذلك عندهم متى أختص بجهة  
أن يكون في مكان أو حيز، ويلزم على المكان  
والحيز الحركة والسكون للتحيز، والتغير  
والحدوث. هذا قول المتكلمين... قال مالك  
رحمه الله: الاستواء معلوم - يعني في اللغة -  
والكيفية مجهول، والسؤال عن هذا بدعة.  
وكذا قالت أم سلمة وهذا القدر كافٍ، ومن

enough. Anybody who wants to make any additions on this should depend on the specific places regarding this topic in the books of Scholars. The Istirwa in the Arabic language is being High, and being established (in a place). I say: the highness of Allah Almighty and him being raised means the height of his glory, attributes, and kingdom.

أراد زيادة عليه فليقف عليه في موضعه من كتب العلماء. والاستواء في كلام العرب هو العلو والاستقرار... قلت: فعلوا الله تعالى وأرتفاعه عبارة عن علو مجده وصفاته وملكوته.

This discussion by Imam Qurtubi clearly rejects the idea of Allah ﷻ having a body, or occupying a space.

Furthermore, **Imam Ibn Kathir** shows us the interpretation of the word Istiwa in his Tafseer under the Ayah (2/29):

*The Istiwa here is under the meaning of intending and turning the focus since it is made transitive with the word (إلى).*

والاستواء ههنا مضمن معنى القصد والإقبال، لأنه عُدِّيَ بِإِلَى.

Then under the Ayah (7/54) he says:

*“Then he did Istiwa on the Arsh”. There are many sayings of the people regarding this topic, and this is not the place to explain it in detail. We will only travel on the path of our pious predecessors, such as Imam Malik, Al-Auza’ee, Al-Thawri, Al-Layth ibn Sa’ad, Al-Shafai, Ahmad, Ishaq ibn Rahrwayh, and others from the leaders of the Muslims. That is, allowing*

ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ. فللناس في هذا المقام مقالات كثيرة جداً ليس هذا موضع بسطها، وإنما نسلك في هذا المقام مذهب السلف الصالح مالك والأوزاعي والثوري والليث بن سعد والشافعي وأحمد وإسحاق



anything other than describing situation, or resemblance, or hindrance. The concept which came up in the minds of the deviant sect Mushabbahah, does not accord with the belief regarding of Allah. Nothing from creation resembles him, and “nothing is like him, and He is all Hearing All Watching.” Rather, the issue is what our Scholars mentioned i.e. Imam Nu’aym bin Hammad Al Khiza’ee, the Shaykh of Bukhari, who said: Whoever resembles Allah to his creation, becomes a Kafir. Also, whoever denies whatever Allah has attributed to himself has become a Kafir. And there is no resemblance in what Allah attributed Himself with, or what his Messenger (attributed Allah with). So whoever proves something for Allah ﷻ with whatever came in the explicit (Muhkam—محكم) Ayah, and the Saheeh Ahadith, in a way that fits the might of Allah, and which rejects any deficiencies from Allah, has traveled the path of guidance.

بن راهويه وغيرهم من أئمة المسلمين قديماً وحديثاً. وهو إمرارها كما جاءت من غير تكييف ولا تشبيه ولا تعطيل. والظاهر المتبادر إلى أذهان المشبهين منفي عن الله. لا يشبهه شيء من خلقه و { لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ } بل الأمر كما قال الأئمة، منهم نعيم بن حباد الخزاعي شيخ البخاري، قال من شبه الله بخلقه كفر، ومن جحد ما وصف الله به نفسه فقد كفر، وليس فيهما وصف الله به نفسه ولا رسوله تشبيه، فمن أثبت لله تعالى ما وردت به الآيات الصريحة، والأخبار الصحيحة، على الوجه الذي يليق بجلال الله، ونفى عن الله تعالى النقائص، فقد سلك سبيل الهدى

Therefore, we see that Imam Ibn Kathir also denied the idea of Allah ﷻ having a body or place. For, that will cause him to be resembling the creations, and Allah ﷻ is free from resembling his creations, as it is proved by the above-mentioned Ayah 11 of Surah Shoorā “Nothing resembles him”.

Furthermore, Imam Nasafi in his **Tafseer Madarik** says under the Ayah (7/54):

*He connected the act of taking control towards the Arsh,, eveb though He Almighty controls every single creation. The reason for Him connecting it to the Arsh is because the Arsh is the greatest and highest of His creation. Explaining the Arsh as couch and Istirva as sitting is baseless just like the Mushabihah sect said. This is because He Almighty was there before the Arsh, while there was no place. Plus, right now he is just like he was before, because Taghayyur (changing) is an attribute of creations. It is narrated from Imam Ja'far Al Sadiq and Imam Al Hasan Al Basri and Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Malik (May Allah pleased with them all): Indeed the Istirva is known, but the modality is unknown, the belief in it is compulsory, negating it is disbelief, asking about it is a sinful innovation.*

أضاف الاستيلاء إلى العرش وإن كان سبحانه وتعالى مستولياً على جميع المخلوقات. لأن العرش أعظمها وأعلاها. وتفسير العرش بالسرير والاستواء بالاستقرار كما تقوله المشبهة باطل. لأنه تعالى كان قبل العرش ولا مكان وهو الآن كما كان. لأن التغير من صفات الأكوان. والمنقول عن الصادق والحسن وأبي حنيفة ومالك رضي الله عنهم. أن الاستواء معلوم، والتكليف فيه مجهول، والإيمان به واجب، والجحود له كفر، والسؤال عنه بدعة.

Then under the Ayah (20/5) he says:

*It is said: Since the sentence: Istiwa upon the Arsh, i.e. the Royal Throne, is a synonym for having a kingdom, they considered it to be a metaphor for ownership. For example, the sentence "Someone did Istiwa on the Arsh" means he became a king even if he never sat on the Royal Throne at all. This is just like the saying: 'His hands are open', i.e. He is generous, even if this person has no hands.*

وقيل: لما كان الاستواء على العرش وهو سرير الملك مما يردف الملك جعلوه كناية عن الملك فقال استوى فلان على العرش أي ملك وإن لم يقعد على السرير البتة وهذا كقولك «يد فلان مبسوطة» أي جواد وإن لم يكن له يد رأساً

Then he says:

*Indeed Allah ﷻ was there when there was no space, so He is wherever He was before the creation of space, as he does not change from what we was before.*

أنه تعالى كان ولا مكان فهو على ما كان قبل خلق المكان لم يتغير عما كان

Imam Nasafi tells us that the Arab people use this word (استوى) as a phrase. When a king owns a kingdom, they say that he is on the Throne, though he does not sit on his throne. This means that sitting on the throne is a metaphor for owning the kingdom. That is the actual meaning of this Ayah, not that Allah has a body and He sat on the Arsh معاذ الله .

Furthermore, **Imam Fakhr Al-Deen Al-Raazi** says under the Ayah (2/29):

*In the Ayah: 'he is the one who created everything in the land for you then he did Istiwa towards the Sky',*

{هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا}

there are many issues concerning this. First issue: The *Istiwa* in the language of Arabs is sometimes used in the meaning of getting up straight, and the opposite of it is being crooked. Since this is the attribute of bodies, it is necessary to believe that Allah ﷻ is free from that. The baselessness of this idea is indicated in this Ayah, because it says: 'Then He did *Istiwa*', which requires delay. If the intention from *Istiwa* was getting up on a place, then that action of getting up would occur first. When it would occur first, then it would not be after creation of whatever is in the Earth. However, the Ayah says: 'Then He did *Istiwa*', which required delay. When this is proven, then it is necessary to interpret it differently.

ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ { فِيهِ مَسَائِلُ: الْمَسْأَلَةُ الْأُولَى: الاستواء في كلام العرب قد يكون بمعنى الانتصاب وضده الإعوجاج ولما كان ذلك من صفات الأجسام، فالله تعالى يجب أن يكون منزهاً عن ذلك ولأن في الآية ما يدل على فساده لأن قوله: { ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى } يقتضي التراخي ولو كان المراد من هذا الاستواء العلو بالمكان لكان ذلك العلو حاصلاً أولاً ولو كان حاصلاً أولاً لهما كان متأخراً عن خلق ما في الأرض لكن قوله: { ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى } يقتضي التراخي، ولما ثبت هذا وجب التأويل.

This Ayah shows that Allah ﷻ created everything in the land, and then He did *Istiwa*. Now if this '*Istiwa*' meant getting up, why would it be followed with the word 'then' (i.e. the Ayah says 'then he did *Istiwa*')? In other words, if Allah ﷻ created everything in the land, why did he get up in a space after that? Would it not make more sense if he did that before? Therefore, since the Ayah said 'then He did *istiwa*' we are bound to interpret it differently.

Then he says under the Ayah (7/54):

‘Then he did Istirwa on the Arsh’. Therefore, you should know that it is not possible for the meaning of this Ayah to be that he is established on the Arsh. There are many rational aspects that reject this idea.

{ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ}. فاعلم أنه لا يمكن أن يكون المراد منه كونه مستقراً على العرش ويدل على فسادة وجوه عقلية، ووجوه نقلية. أما العقلية فأمر

Then he starts to mention those aspects:

The first aspect is that: If He was established on the Arsh, then He would be limited on the side that is near the Arsh, otherwise it will necessitate the concept that the Arsh is inside him which is impossible. It is rationally necessary for everything that is limited that nothing stops it from becoming a bit bigger or smaller, this is something that is obvious. Now, if the Creator Almighty was limited from some sides, then it would mean his being will accept increment and decrement. Anything that falls under this, its limitation to that specific quantity is due to some factor that limits it. And everything that is like this is a creation. Therefore, it is proved that if He ﷻ is on the Arsh, then He will be limited on the side that is close to Arsh, and if He is like that, then He will be a creation and this is impossible. Therefore, the fact of him being situated on the Arsh, it is necessary that it be impossible as well.

أولها: أنه لو كان مستقراً على العرش لكان من الجانب الذي يلي العرش متناهياً وإلا لزم كون العرش داخلياً في ذاته وهو محال، وكل ما كان متناهياً فإن العقل يقضي بأنه لا يمنع أن يصير أزيد منه أو أنقص منه بذرة والعلم بهذا الجواز ضروري، فلو كان الباري تعالى متناهياً من بعض الجوانب لكانت ذاته قابلة للزيادة والنقصان، وكل ما كان كذلك كان اختصاصه بذلك المقدار المعين لتخصيص مخصص وتقدير مقدر، وكل ما كان كذلك فهو محدث، فثبت أنه تعالى لو كان على العرش لكان من الجانب الذي يلي العرش متناهياً، ولو كان كذلك لكان محدثاً وهذا محال فكونه على العرش يجب أن يكون محالاً.

This means that basically if anything is situated on a site, it will be limited to that site. Anything that has limited dimensions cannot be a creator. For, in order for it to be limited, there has to be a creator that set its bounds. It is intellectually impossible to think that the Creator Almighty can have a Creator. Hence, it is proven that something that is limited cannot be a creator. Since the Creator is unlimited, then it is necessary to believe that He is free from a venue. Then, he starts off with the second aspect, he says:

*The Second aspect is that, had He been in a venue and direction, then He would be either unlimited from all directions, or He would be limited in all directions, or he would be limited from some directions and unlimited from others. All of these are baseless. Therefore, the opinion of Him being in a venue and place is totally absurd. The explanation of the baselessness of the first situation (the belief that He is in a place, and He is unlimited from all sides): (if we accept this claim then) It will become necessary (to believe) that His being is mixed with all the bodies which are higher and lower, and that He will be mixed with nasty and filthy things, and Allah is beyond that. If we move further with this believe: Then (it will be necessary to believe) that the skies are inside in His being, along with the earth being inside His being as well. (Following the argument) when it becomes necessary to believe that, then we will say: Something*

وثانيها: لو كان في مكان وجهة لكان إما أن يكون غير متناه من كل الجهات. وإما أن يكون متناهياً في كل الجهات. وإما أن يكون متناهياً من بعض الجهات دون البعض والكل باطل فالقول بكونه في المكان والحيز باطل قطعاً. بيان فساد القسم الأول: أنه يلزم أن تكون ذاته مخالطة لجميع الأجسام السفلية والعلوية، وأن تكون مخالطة للقاذورات والنجاسات. وتعالى الله عنه، وأيضاً فعلى هذا التقدير: تكون السموات حالة في ذاته، وتكون الأرض أيضاً حالة في ذاته. إذا ثبت هذا فنقول: الشيء الذي هو محل السموات، إما أن يكون هو عين

*that is a site of skies, will either the same thing that is the site of lands as well, or not. If it is the same site (of skies and lands both), then it will be necessary for both Skies and Lands to be situated in one single site without any distinction between both of their places. When these two things get situated in one single place in a way that they both cannot be distinguished from one another, then it will be necessarily said: 'The skies are not distinguished from the Earths in terms of their being.' That is totally absurd to say. But if we say that the site of Earth is different from the site of Skies, then it will necessitate the belief that the being of Allah is compiled from parts and portions, and that is impossible.*

الشيء الذي هو محل الأرضين أو غيره، فإن كان الأول لزم كون السموات والأرضين حالتين في محل واحد من غير امتياز بين محليهما أصلاً، وكل حاليين حلا في محل واحد، لم يكن أحدهما ممتازاً عن الآخر، فلزم أن يقال: السموات لا تمتاز عن الأرضين في الذات، وذلك باطل، وإن كان الثاني: لزم أن تكون ذات الله تعالى مركبة من الأجزاء والأبغاض وهو محال.

One example of this would be: Think about mixing color dyes in water. The color dyes will be considered one solute and the water will be the solvent. Now, think about mixing two different color dyes in the same cup of water. They both will be transmitted inside the water in such a way that there would be no distinguishing possible. Now think about the false believe of God being situated in a spot without any bounds, which will mean that the Lands and Skies are inside him, in such a way that these both entities cannot be distinguished (just like the two color dyes got mixed). But that is not true, since Earth and Sky are able to be distinguished. Hence, the baselessness of the following claim is proved: That He is situated in a spot without any bounds. معاذ الله. Nevertheless, Imam Al-Raazi starts off with the third aspect and says:

*The third rejection is when it is said that His being is present in every spot and direction. This way, it will be either said: The thing that is on top is the same thing that's on the bottom. Thus, one single being will be present at different places simultaneously. Now, if this is imaginable, then why is the following concept not imaginable that one single body can be at different places at the same time? That is because it is obviously impossible.*

والثالث: وهو أن ذات الله تعالى إذا كانت حاصلة في جميع الأحياء والجهات. فإما أن يقال: الشيء الذي حصل فوق هو عين الشيء الذي حصل تحت، فحينئذ تكون الذات الواحدة قد حصلت دفعة واحدة في أحياء كثيرة، وإن عقل ذلك فلم لا يعقل أيضاً حصول الجسم الواحد في أحياء كثيرة دفعة واحدة وهو محال في بديهة العقل.

This means that one should not say that Allah is present everywhere, and in every direction. For, one example of that would be that, imagine two entities, one being on top, and the other one being on the bottom. It is obvious that these two things are different from each other. How can the same thing be on top and on the bottom simultaneously? This goes against rationality.

Then he mentioned the second false concept:

*As for the second type: that is the concept that Allah is situated in a spot but is limited from all sides. Thus, we will say, whatever is like that (situated in a spot but is limited from all sides), then that will obviously accept increment and decrement. Everything that is like that, (which accepts increment and decrement), its limitation to that specific quantity is because of some factor that limits it. Now, anything falling under this category is a creation (not a creator). Moreover,*

وأما القسم الثاني: وهو أن يقال: أنه تعالى متناه من كل الجهات. فنقول: كل ما كان كذلك فهو قابل للزيادة والنقصان في بديهة العقل، وكل ما كان كذلك كان اختصاصه بالمقدار البعين، لأجل تخصيصه مخصص، وكل ما كان كذلك فهو محدث، وأيضاً فإن جاز أن يكون الشيء



*if it was possible for a thing which is limited from all sides to be pre-eternal and the Creator of the universe, then why is it not imaginable to believe that the creator of universe is the Sun, or Moon, or other stars. This concept is unanimously considered baseless.*

المحدود من كل الجوانب قديماً أزلياً  
فأعلاً للعالم، فلم لا يعقل أن يقال:  
خالق العالم هو الشمس، أو القمر، أو  
كوكب آخر، وذلك باطل باتفاق.

As we mentioned earlier, anything that is limited, becomes limited due to a factor. The creator sets bounds and limits for that thing and sets it to exist that way. Therefore, it is obvious now that God cannot be limited, if He cannot be limited, He cannot be situated in a spot. For, if someone limited can be a creator, then why is it impossible to believe that Sun, Moon, or any other star is a creator? This concept of stars being God is unanimously rejected.

Moving on to the third rejection, he says:

*As for the third type: which is the concept that He is limited from some sides, and unlimited from the rest. That is also baseless from many aspects. First: (for argument's sake, it will be necessary to believe that) the side in which he is limited, is not the same as the side in which he is unlimited. Otherwise, it will prove two opposites to be present together, which is impossible. Since the above mentioned argument proved variation, it will necessitate Him being compiled from parts and portions.*

وأما القسم الثالث: وهو أن يقال: أنه  
متناه من بعض الجوانب، وغير متناه من  
سائر الجوانب، فهذا أيضاً باطل من وجوه:  
أحدها: أن الجانب الذي صدق عليه  
كونه متناهياً غير ما صدق عليه كونه غير  
متناه، وإلا لصدق النقيضان معاً وهو  
محال. وإذا حصل التباين لزم كونه تعالى  
مركباً من الأجزاء والأبعض،

Think of two sides, Side A and Side B. If God is limited on Side A, and unlimited on Side B, that means Side A and Side B are two different things. If you believe they are the same thing, then that would be like saying 'a number is odd and even at the same time'. But since it is established that Side A and Side B are different, that will prove variation in God's Being. This is clearly impossible, because if something varies, then it will be necessary for it to be made up of parts i.e. some parts made up the entity present in Side A, other parts made up entity that's present in Side B.

In any case, he further mentions another aspect of how the following claim is baseless that He is limited from some sides, and unlimited from the rest. Therefore he says:

*The second rejection: Indeed the side in which its imaginable for him being limited, will either be equal to the side in which is imaginable for Him being unlimited, or not. The first one is baseless. For, the things that are equal in essentiality whatever is applicable upon one of them, is applicable upon the rest too (meaning there cannot be any difference between the two things). But if you consider that to be true, then the side in which He is unlimited, it will be possible that He can become limited. Then, the side in which He is limited, it will be possible that he turns unlimited.*

وثانيها: أن الجانب الذي صدق حكم العقل عليه بكونه متناهياً، إما أن يكون مساوياً للجانب الذي صدق حكم العقل عليه بكونه غير متناه، وإما أن لا يكون كذلك، والأول باطل، لأن الأشياء المتساوية في تمام الباهية كل ما صح على واحد منها صح على الباقي، وإذا كان كذلك: فالجانب للذي هو غير متناه يمكن أن يصير متناهياً، والجانب الذي هو متناه يمكن أن يصير غير متناه.

Again, consider two sides: Side A and Side B. If God is limited in Side A, and unlimited in Side B, then there are two situations. Either 1)

both sides will be equal, or 2) They won't be equal. Let's talk about the second one first. If they both are not equal, that that will mean his being accepts variation, and we already rejected this idea earlier. Nevertheless, the first situation is also baseless, because in order for them to be equal they have to be the same in every aspect. How can he be limited in one place and unlimited in other place yet both places will be considered to be the same? This way, it will be possible that he turns from limited to unlimited in Side A, and from unlimited to limited in Side B, which is totally absurd to believe.

Then he says:

*When this is what the issue has become, then growing, decaying, increment, decrement, separation, and tearing will be possible in his being. All of these things are creations, and they are impossible to occur on the pre-eternal deity. Hence, it is proven that when He is present in a site or direction, then He will be either unlimited from all sides, or limited from all sides, or limited from some sides while being unlimited from the rest of the sides. Thus, it has been proven now that all of these three types are invalid. Therefore, it is necessary for us to believe that Allah ﷻ being situated in a spot or direction is impossible.*

ومتى كان الأمر كذلك كان النمو والذبول والزيادة والنقصان والتفرق والتمزق على ذاته ممكناً، وكل ما كان كذلك فهو محدث، وذلك على الإله القديم محال، فثبت أنه تعالى لو كان حاصلاً في الحيز والجهة، لكان إما أن يكون غير متناه من كل الجهات وإما أن يكون متناهياً من كل الجهات، أو كان متناهياً من بعض الجهات، وغير متناه من سائر الجهات، فثبت أن الأقسام الثلاثة باطلة، فوجب أن نقول القول بكونه تعالى حاصلاً في الحيز والجهة محال.

Then under the Ayah (20/5) he says:

*The deviant sect Mushabbahah adhered to this Ayah to prove that*

المشبهة تعلقت بهذه الآية في أن

*their deity is sitting on the Arsh. That is proved baseless by intellect and narrations from many aspects. First of it is: Indeed He ﷻ was there when there was no Arsh, or any place. When He created everything, He was not dependent on any spot; rather He was independent from it. Thus, that is the attribute which has been with Him since pre-eternity. However, the claimant falsely claimed that the Arsh has been with Allah since pre-eternity.*

معبودهم جالس على العرش وهذا باطل بالعقل والنقل من وجوه. أحدها: أنه سبحانه وتعالى كان ولا عرش ولا مكان، ولما خلق الخلق لم يحتج إلى مكان بل كان غنياً عنه فهو بالصفة التي لم يزل عليها إلا أن يزعم زاعم أنه لم يزل مع الله عرش.

Now explaining the second aspect to reject the claim, he says:

*The second aspect is that: The one who is sitting on the Arsh, it is necessary for one part of Him to be present on the right side of the Arsh, while it is not present in the left side of the Arsh. This way, His being will be a compilation and combination. Any-thing that is like that (compilation or combination) requires a compiler and combiner, and that is impossible for Allah ﷻ.*

وثانيها: أن الجالس على العرش لا بد وأن يكون الجزء الحاصل منه في يمين العرش غير الحاصل في يسار العرش فيكون في نفسه مؤلفاً مركباً وكل ما كان كذلك احتاج إلى المؤلف والمركب وذلك محال.

Furthermore, he rejects the claim by third aspect, and he says:

*Third aspect: The one who sits on the Arsh will be established on it either along with the ability to move around or not. In the first case scenario He will become a spot for movement and*

وثالثها: أن الجالس على العرش إما أن يكون متمكناً من الانتقال والحركة أو لا

*immobility. This way He will definitely be considered a creation (because movement and immobility are creations themselves). However, in the second scenario He will be like someone who's tied up. Rather, He will be like the handicap person, or even worse. For, when the handicap person wishes to move his head or eyes, it is possible for him to do so. But that does not seem possible for the one they consider God.*

يُمكنه ذلك فإن كان الأول فقد صار محل الحركة والسكون فيكون محدثاً لا محالة وإن كان الثاني كان كالمربوط بل كان كالزمن بل أسوأ منه فإن الزمن إذا شاء الحركة في رأسه وحدثته أمكنه ذلك وهو غير ممكن على معبودهم.

Moving on the fourth aspect, he says:

*The fourth aspect: The one who they consider God will either be present in every spot, or in some spot and not the others. Thus, if He is present in every spot, it will be necessary to believe that He is present in filthy and nasty things too. This is something no sane person will ever believe. However, if one says that he is in some spots not the others, then it would mean He was needful of a creator who limited him to that spot. This will prove for him to be needy towards something, and this is impossible for Allah ﷻ.*

ورابعها: هو أن معبودهم إما أن يحصل في كل مكان أو في مكان دون مكان فإن حصل في كل مكان لزمهم أن يحصل في مكان النجاسات والقاذورات وذلك لا يقوله عاقل، وإن حصل في مكان دون مكان افتقر إلى مخصص يخصصه بذلك المكان فيكون محتاجاً وهو على الله محال.

Then he says:

*The fifth aspect is that: The Ayah, "Nothing is like him" (Surah Shoora, 11), deals with rejecting equality in every aspect by a proof that validates exception. Thus, it should have been*

وخاصها: أن قوله: { لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ } [الشورى: 11] يتناول نفي المساواة من

*acceptable to say that nothing is like Him except in terms of sitting, or except in terms of quantity, or except in terms of color, while the validity of this exception requires including all of these issues under it. Therefore, if He was sitting, then someone who resembles Him in sitting will come up. Then at that time, the meaning of the Ayah will become null.*

جميع الوجوه بدليل صحة الاستثناء فإنه يحسن أن يقال ليس كمثله شيء إلا في الجلوس وإلا في المقدار وإلا في اللون وصحة الاستثناء تقتضي دخول جميع هذه الأمور تحته. فلو كان جالساً حصل من يماثله في الجلوس فحينئذ يبطل معنى الآية.

This means that creating exceptions in this Ayah is not a valid way to go. For example, if someone says nothing is like God except in terms of sitting, then that will be like creating exceptions. Since, a human is attributed with the action of sitting, then following this claim, anybody would say that this resembles Allah. Once this claim comes up then that would go against the meaning of this Ayah. Hence, it's proven that it is invalid.

Furthermore, he says:

*The sixth aspect is that: The Ayah, "That day, eight (of the Angels) will hold the Arsh of your Lord above them." Therefore, when the Angels are carriers of the Arsh, and the Arsh is the spot of their Lord, and then it will become necessary to believe that the Angels are carrying their creator and deity which is totally irrational.*

وسادسها: قوله تعالى: { وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَنِيَّةٌ } [الحاقة: 17] فإذا كانوا حاملين للعرش والعرش مكان معبودهم فيلزم أن تكون الملائكة حاملين لخالقهم ومعبودهم وذلك غير معقول.

This means that if angels are holding the throne of their lord, then their lord is needful of angels to hold it and we already established earlier that whoever is needful of something cannot be God.

Nevertheless, after providing all these convincing proofs from Tafseer of Imam Al-Raazi, we will discuss the opinion of **Al-Shawkani**, who is considered to be one of the Imams of the people who have the opinion of Allah being in an upper direction, and they claim for the Arsh to be his space using the Ayahs we mentioned. Nevertheless, in Tafseer Fath Al Qadeer he says under the Ayah (5/20):

*Ahmad ibn Yahya narrated from Tha'lab that he said: The Istiwa is turning the attention towards something. That is what Al-Zujaj and Al-Fara said. It is also said that it is a metaphor for kingdom and empire.*

قال أحمد بن يحيى قال ثعلب الاستواء الإقبال على الشيء، وكذا قال الزجاج والفراء. وقيل هو كناية عن الملك والسلطان.

Even Al-Shawkani did not apply Istiwa to its apparent meaning. He did not prove that Allah has a body or direction. Narrating Al-Shawkani's text should not prove we support or follow his ideology. The only reason we mentioned him over here is to show the readers that though he has erred and gone against the belief of Ahl-us-Sunnah in many other places, he accorded with the creed of Ahl-us-Sunnah in this ruling. This means that there are only a few people who have malice in their hearts, whose aim is to cause Fitna in the Ummah, who call themselves Scholars and derive proofs from these Ayahs that Allah has a body, place, or direction. معاذ الله.

After discussing the detailed opinions of the honorable commentators of the Quran, we will now discuss the work of the reviver of 14<sup>th</sup> Century (A.H.), Ala Hazrat, Imam Ahmed Raza Khan (May Allah have blessings on him).

# Chapter 5

The opinion of Ala Hazrat,  
Imam of Ahl-us-Sunnah.



This chapter will mainly talk about the opinion put forth by Imam of Ahl ul Sunnah, who was the reviver of Islam in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the role model devotee of the beloved Rasool ﷺ, and a legendary Imam of theology, Imam Ahmad Raza Khan, in his booklet “Qawari ul Qahhar (قوارع القهار)” which can be found in Fatawa Razawiya volume 29. Therefore, after he talks about the difference between Mutashabih (متشابه) and Muhkam (محکم) Ayahs, and the two opinions of Tafweeth (تفویض) and Taweel (تأویل), he starts off with rejecting the claims of Allah ﷻ having a body and/or place.

Presenting the **verdicts of some renowned jurists** he says:

*It is stated in Bahr ul Raiq and Alamgeeri that: The one who tries to prove a location for Allah is a Kafir.* اور بحر الرائق و عالمگیری کی یہ عبارت:   
 يكفر باثبات المكان لله تعالى<sup>21</sup>

Further, he mentions:

*The text of Fatawa of the great Imam Qaadhi Khan reads: Any man that says “the God on sky knows that I don’t have anything” becomes a Kafir since Allah is free from location.* اور فتاویٰ امام اجل قاضی خاں کی یہ عبارت:   
 رجل قال خدائے بر آسمان می داند که من چیزی ندارم یکون کفر الان الله تعالى منزّه عن المكان<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Fatawa Razawiyya, Markaz e Ahlesunnat Gujrat, Vol 29, p. 138

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

### **How is it to say “Allah is everywhere”?**

After providing verdicts of scholars he mentions some intellectual proofs to reject the claim of Allah ﷻ having a location. Therefore he says:

*“It is impossible for anything that occupies space to be in two different places at the same time. It is even worse to believe that the Arsh, Earth, and all locations whether higher or lower are filled with Him. For, this will firstly necessitate the belief of Him being able to split along with hundreds of other impossibilities. Secondly, it will cause the belief of Him being inferior and lower. Therefore, inevitably one has to belief that there is no location for Him, neither Arsh nor any land. He is not in any place, not on the Arsh, nor on the lowest level of the land. However, his Divine Knowledge, Power, Hearing, Seeing, Kingdom are present everywhere.”*

مکانی چیز کا ایک آن میں دو مختلف مکان میں موجود ہونا محال اور یہ اس سے بھی شنیع تر ہے کہ عرش تا فرش تمام مکانات بالا و زیریں دفعۃً اس سے بھرے ہوئے مانو کہ تجزیہ وغیرہ صداہا استحالے لازم آنے کے علاوہ معاذ اللہ اللہ تعالیٰ کو اسفل و ادنیٰ کہنا بھی صحیح ہوگا لاجرم قطعاً یقیناً ایمان لانا پڑے گا کہ عرش و فرش کچھ اس کا مکان نہیں، نہ وہ عرش میں ہے نہ ماتحت الثریٰ میں، نہ کسی جگہ میں ہاں اس کا علم و قدرت و سمع و بصر و ملک ہر جگہ ہے<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, The Imam mentions:

*“It is obviously absurd to believe that Allah Almighty has filled all locations, whether higher or lower. Otherwise, the same impossibilities will result. For example, if you*

اللہ عزوجل کا تمام اکمنہ زیر و بالا کو بھرے ہونا تو بدہائے محال ہے ورنہ وہی استحالے لازم

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. 153-154

*consider Him to be in an upper location, then that would mean that the other things are lower than Him. If you believe He is in a lower location then that would mean that things are above him. If you believe him to be in a middle location then that would mean that things are both higher and lower than Him. Although the Apostle ﷺ of Allah ﷻ says that there is nothing above or below Him. Therefore it is imperative to believe that Lord Almighty is free from Location."*

آئیں ، اب اگر مکان بالا میں ہوگا تو اشیاء اس کے نیچے ہوں گی اور مکان زیریں میں ہوا تو اشیاء اُس سے اوپر ہوں گی اور وسط میں ہوا تو اوپر نیچے دونوں ہوں گی حالانکہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ تعالیٰ وسلم فرماتے ہیں، نہ اس سے اوپر کچھ ہے نہ نیچے کچھ ، تو واجب ہوا کہ مولیٰ تعالیٰ مکان سے پاک ہو<sup>24</sup>

In any case, Ala Hazrat further denies the claim that Allah ﷻ is present everywhere. He says:

*When the people of deviant sect Mujassama think that their imaginary God has filled in every location from Land to the Arsh then that will mean He is present in every restroom, shower place, inside the stomach of men, inside the womb of ladies. Also, it will mean that the people will step on Him while walking, and He will have shoes put on him. Along with this, following this argument, how do you know that the air is not God, since it has filled in every spot?*

جب مجسمہ گمراہوں کا وہی معبود عرش تا فرش ہر مکان کو بھرے ہوئے ہے تو معاذ اللہ ہر پاخانے غسل خانے میں ہوگا مردوں کے پیٹ اور عورتوں کے رحم میں بھی ہوگا، راہ چلنے والے اسی پر پاؤں اور جوتا رکھ کر چلیں گے معذرا اس تقدیر پر تمہیں کیا معلوم کہ وہ یہی ہوا ہو جو ہر جگہ بھری ہے<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 154

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. pg. 160-161

This is the best proof that resembles the opinion of Imam Al-Raazi which we already discussed earlier. But one object Ala Hazrat presented here was that: since according to them, God is someone who is present everywhere, then how do they know that air is not God? Air does fulfill their requirement of Godhood, which is to be present everywhere.

### **What's the problem considering a location for him?**

Then he says:

*"If you consider Arsh or Land as his location, then the question is raised whether 1) Allah was occupying that space since pre-eternity or 2) He started occupying space now? According to the first scenario, that location will be considered pre-eternal too. Believing any creation to be pre-eternal is Kufr according to the consensus of Muslims. As for the second scenario (if you believe that He started occupying space now, and He was not before), it would result in the concept of variation in Allah. That is against the status of Godhood."*

عرش فرش جگہ کو معاذ اللہ مکانِ الہی کہو اللہ تعالیٰ ازل سے اس میں متمکن تھا یا اب متمکن ہوا، پہلی تقدیر پر وہ مکان بھی ازلی ٹھہرا اور کسی مخلوق کو ازلی ماننا باجماع مسلمین کفر ہے دوسری تقدیر پر اللہ تعالیٰ عزوجل میں تغیر آیا اور یہ خلافِ شان الوہیت ہے<sup>26</sup>

Providing a very strong proof to reject the claims of deviants, he says:

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p.154-155

*“There are three possible scenarios for the one who sits on something:*

- 1- *That sitting place is equal to Him*
- 2- *That place is bigger than Him, i.e. He is sitting on it and there are still empty spots left.*
- 3- *That place is smaller than Him, i.e. He did not fit totally in that place in such a way that some part of Him is outside the bounds of that place.*

*All of these scenarios are impossible to believe for Allah.*

*For, if He is equal to the Arsh, then however many divisions are hypothetically possible to do on the Arsh, those same ones would become possible for Him too.*

*If He is smaller than the Arsh, then in this situation, it will be preferred to consider Arsh as the God since it is bigger than God.*

*If He is bigger than the Arsh then this will actually cause divisions in his being, since one divisible part is attached to the Arsh, and the other part is outside.”*

جو کسی چیز پر بیٹھا ہو اس کی تین ہی

صورتیں ممکن، یا تو وہ بیٹھک اس کے برابر

ہے یا اس سے بڑی ہے کہ وہ بیٹھا ہے اور

جگہ خالی باقی ہے یا چھوٹی ہے کہ وہ پورا

اس بیٹھک پر نہ آیا کچھ حصہ باہر ہے، اللہ

عزوجل میں یہ تینوں صورتیں محال ہیں،

وہ عرش کے برابر ہو تو جتنے حصے عرش میں

ہو سکتے ہیں اس میں بھی ہو سکیں گے، اور

چھوٹا ہو تو اسے خدا کہنے سے عرش کو خدا

کہنا اولیٰ ہے کہ وہ خدا سے بھی بڑا ہے اور

بڑا ہو تو بالفعل حصے متعین ہو گئے کہ خدا

کا ایک حصہ عرش سے ملا ہے اور ایک حصہ

باہر ہے<sup>27</sup>۔

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.156

This is proved to be such a great counter-argument by Ala Hazrat that breaks down all the claims of the deviants.

Nevertheless, he further states:

*"The question comes up, can God create something bigger than the Arsh or not?*

*If not, then it will mean he became unable to do something even though Allah is certainly All-Powerful over everything. In any case, even if God is not considered to be smaller than the Arsh, but equal to the Arsh, even then the argument comes up that if He can make something bigger than Arsh, then He can make something bigger than Himself. For, when both (Arsh and God) are equal, then whatever is bigger than the Arsh, will be bigger than God.*

*Now if you say that God is bigger than Arsh, then He cannot be unlimitedly big since unlimited dimensions are considered baseless by definite proofs. Then definitely He will be bigger in a limited quantity.*

*For example, consider something double the size of Arsh, now keep considering sizes 1.25 times, 1.5 times, 1.75 times, 2 times, or 3 times of the Arsh. Then, ask yourself if God is capable to create these or not. If you say no, then you will consider God to be powerless. But, if you say*

خدا اس عرش سے بھی بڑا بنا سکتا ہے یا نہیں، اگر نہیں تو عاجز ہوا حالانکہ {إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ}۔ اور اگر ہاں تو اب اگر خدا عرش سے چھوٹا نہیں برابر بھی ہو تو جب عرش سے بڑا بنا سکتا ہے اپنے سے بڑا بھی بنا سکتا ہے کہ جب دونوں برابر ہیں تو جو عرش سے بڑا ہے خدا سے بھی بڑا ہے اور اگر خدا عرش سے بڑا ہی تو غیر متناہی بڑا نہیں ہو سکتا کہ لاتناہی ابعاد دلائل قاطعہ سے باطل ہے لاجرم بقدر متناہی بڑا ہوگا۔ مثلاً عرش سے دونا فرض کیجئے، اب عرش سے سوائی ڈیڑھی، پون دگنی، تگنی مقداروں کو پوچھتے جاییں کہ خدا ان کے بنانے پر قادر ہے یا نہیں، جہاں انکار کرو گے خدا کو عاجز کہو گے اور اقرار کرتے جاؤ گے تو وہی مصیبت آڑے آئے گی

yes, then the same problem will occur, that God can create something bigger than himself.”

کہ خدا اپنے سے بڑا بنا سکتا ہے<sup>28</sup>

### **Comparing the size of Arsh**

Following the argument, Imam e Ahl e Sunnat mentions that if one considers God to be sitting on the Arsh then how will His size be compared to the Arsh. He states:

“Necessarily, if God is considered to be sitting on the Arsh, then He has to be bigger than that. Otherwise, God and His creation would be equal, or it will be bigger than Him. If the one sitting is bigger than the place, then necessarily He will not fit on it entirely, whatever part of Him doesn't fit, will be outside that place. Therefore, it will mean that He has two parts. One that is attached with the Arsh, the other one which is not.

Now the following questions come up:

- 1) Are both these two parts God or
  - 2) the one that is attached with the Arsh only He is God while the one that is outside is away from being God,
  - 3) Or vice versa (i.e. the one that's outside is the God, and the one that's attached to the Arsh is not).
- Another scenario will be that:

یہ تو ضرور ہے کہ خدا جب عرش پر بیٹھے تو عرش سے بڑا ہو ورنہ خدا اور مخلوق برابر ہو جائیں گے یا مخلوق اس سے بڑی ٹھہرے گی، اور جب وہ بیٹھنے والا اپنی بیٹھک سے بڑا ہے تو قطعاً اس پر پورا نہیں آسکتا جتنا بڑا ہے اتنا حصہ باہر رہے گا تو اس میں دو حصے ہوئے ایک عرش سے لگا اور ایک الگ۔ اب سوال ہوگا کہ یہ دونوں حصے خدا ہیں یا جتنا عرش سے لگا ہے وہی خدا ہے باہر والا خدائی سے جدا ہے یا اس کا عکس ہے یا اُن میں کوئی خدا نہیں بلکہ

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

4) None of them are God, rather the combination of both is the God.

*For the first scenario, it will result in the concept of there being two Gods. For the second scenario, God and Arsh would prove to be equal since the one that's attached to Arsh is the only God. For the third scenario, it will mean that God is not sitting on the Arsh since the one that was outside the proximity of Arsh was considered God. For the fourth scenario, Arsh would not prove to be His location, because if that is the location, it is only limited to being a location of the part that is attached to it, and that is not God."*

دونوں کا مجموعہ خدا ہے پہلی تقدیر پر دو خدا لازم آئیں گے، دوسری پر خدا و عرش برابر ہو گئے کہ خدا تو اتنے ہی کا نام رہا جو عرش سے ملا ہوا ہے۔ تیسری تقدیر پر خدا عرش پر نہ بیٹھا کہ جو خدا ہے وہ الگ ہے اور جو لگا ہے وہ خدا نہیں، چوتھی پر عرش خدا کا مکان نہ ہوا کہ وہ اگر مکان ہے تو اُتنے ٹکڑے کا جو اس سے ملا ہے اور وہ خدا نہیں۔<sup>29</sup>

He further mentions a simple proof which can be understood even by children. He says:

*"If you think the Lord Almighty has climbed or is sitting on the Arsh, then the question comes up: whether he can come down from it or not? If you say no then that will mean He is powerless and someone powerless cannot be God. If you say He can, then it will mean that it's possible for him to be lower than something, and a lower entity cannot be God."*

مولیٰ تعالیٰ اگر عرش پر چڑھا بیٹھا ہے تو اس سے اُتر بھی سکتا ہے یا نہیں، اگر نہیں تو عاجز ہوا اور عاجز خدا نہیں، اور اگر ہاں تو جب اُترے گا عرش سے نیچے ہو گا تو اس کا اسفل ہونا بھی ممکن ہوا اور اسفل خدا نہیں<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. pg. 158



### Does Allah have a direction?

After explaining many objections that came up on the creed that Allah has a body and location, the Imam starts to talk about the objections that come up when the direction is proved for him, he says:

*"Being on top or being on bottom are two relative concepts. One cannot exist without the existence of the other. Even children know that nothing can be considered "being on top" unless there is something underneath it, and it is established that there was nothing in pre-eternity except Allah. It is mentioned in Saheeh Bukhari on the authority of Imran bin Husain (May Allah be pleased with him), that RasoolAllah ﷺ says: "Allah was there when nothing else was there."*

*This means it is impossible that Allah was on top or on the bottom in pre-eternity. When this is impossible in the pre-eternity, it will always stay impossible. Otherwise, it will mean that Allah is established with creations, and that is impossible."*

جہات فوق و تحت دو مفہوم اضافی ہیں ایک کا وجود بے دوسرے کے محال ہر بچہ جانتا ہے کہ کسی چیز کو اوپر نہیں کہہ سکتے جب تک دوسری چیز نیچی نہ ہو، اور ازل میں اللہ عزوجل کے سوا کچھ نہ تھا۔ صحیح بخاری شریف میں عمران بن حصین رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہ سے ہے رسول اللہ صلی اللہ تعالیٰ علیہ وسلم فرماتے ہیں: کان اللہ تعالیٰ ولم یکن شیئی غیرہ (اللہ تعالیٰ تھا اور اس کے سوا کچھ نہ تھا) تو ازل میں اللہ عزوجل کا فوق یا تحت ہونا محال اور جب ازل میں محال تھا تو ہمیشہ محال رہے گا ورنہ اللہ عزوجل کے ساتھ حوادث کا قیام لازم آئے گا اور یہ محال ہے۔<sup>31</sup>

This means that once it is established that Allah ﷻ was not above or below anything in pre-eternity, he will always stay like that. Variation

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p.157

and changes are not from the attributes of Godhood as we already discussed earlier.

### **Why do you face the Qibla then?**

Finally, the Imam mentions a convincing intellectual objection that comes up on the belief of Allah being present in a specific direction. He says:

*"The pure Sharia has ordered the people to face the Qibla during their Salah, this is the definite proof that Allah ﷻ is free from direction and location. For, if there was really a direction established for Allah, then a person should be facing the actual Lord, standing in His court, bowing down in front of Him, prostrating for Him, etc. It is merely pointless for the people to turn away from above-mentioned things and prostrate towards a certain location while their Lord is in a place other than that. For example, think about a courtier who turns away from the king, and salutes him while facing a random wall in the royal yard. Furthermore, if he stands in front of the wall with his hands folded out of respect, then in all of these situations he will be called either an ill-mannered clown, or*

شرع مطہر نے تمام جہان کے مسلمانوں کو نماز میں قبلہ کی طرف منہ کرنے کا حکم فرمایا، یہی حکم دلیل قطعی ہے کہ اللہ عزوجل جہت و مکان سے پاک و بری ہے، اگر خود حضرت عزت جلالہ کے لیے طرف وجہت ہوتی محض مہمل باطل تھا کہ اصل معبود کی طرف منہ کر کے اس کی خدمت میں کھڑا ہونا اس کی عظمت کے حضور پیٹھ جھکانا اس کے سامنے خاک پر منہ ملنا چھوڑ کر ایک اور مکان کی طرف سجدہ کرنے لگیں حالانکہ معبود دوسرے مکان میں ہے، بادشاہ کا بھرتی اگر بادشاہ کو چھوڑ کر دیوان خانہ کی کسی دیوار کی طرف منہ کر کے آداب مجرا بجالائے اور دیوار ہی کے سامنے ہاتھ باندھے کھڑا رہے تو بے ادب مسخرہ کسلائے گا یا

*insane."*

مجنون پاگل<sup>32</sup>۔

This is the question that comes up on their belief. If you all say that Allah is on the top, then why do you face the Kaaba while praying? Why not face towards the Sky and pray? The example was given by Ala Hazrat of the courtier facing away from the king. That courtier will definitely be considered insane.

All of these objections that come up on their creed clearly prove that there is no location, direction, or body for Allah ﷻ. He is beyond these limitations and free from all defects.

After providing all these evidences, finally we will move towards concluding our work.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. pg. 160

# Chapter 6

## Conclusion

### Tafweedh (تفويض) and Taweel (تأويل)

As we already mentioned earlier that there are two groups of scholars, the traditional ones and the contemporary ones. The traditional scholars opted the way of Tafweedh (تفويض); they did not try to find the meaning of these Ayahs, nor did they interpret them. They just believed in the way it was revealed and left the meaning to Allah. The second group of scholars were those who cross checked the Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs, with the Muhkam (محكم) ones and came up with a meaning that seems appropriate. In other words, they came up with an interpretation which is also known as Taweel (تأويل).

Imam Abu Mansoor Al-Maturidi mentions some aspects which could be the reason for interpreting the Ayah. However, one has to be sure that these are not the ultimate meaning, but just meanings which seem appropriate. Some of the reasons are as followed:

- 1) To correspond Mutashabih (متشابه) Ayahs with the Muhkam (محكم) ones.
- 2) To keep people away from having the creed of تجسيم (having an opinion that Allah ﷻ has a body—معاذ الله).
- 3) To give substantiated replies to the ones who deny the attributes of Allah ﷻ.
- 4) To hunt down the false creeds of the people who have the creed of تجسيم with strong proofs. Etc.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Kanz ul Iman Ka Mutala, Prof Dilawar Khan, Pg. 1

Then some of the rules of interpretation are as mentioned:

- 1) The derived meanings are just probable and estimated.
- 2) The derived meanings must be according to the divine status of Allah ﷻ.
- 3) Be sure to understand that the exact meaning is known by only Allah ﷻ and his messenger ﷺ.
- 4) The derived meaning has to be proved by explicit narrations (from Quran or Hadith).
- 5) First step is to do Tafweedh, then Taweel.
- 6) There is no room for interpretation in explicit words of Ayahs.
- 7) Such a derived meaning is not at all acceptable which is against the basic creeds of Islam, or explicit narrations. That is not considered interpretation, rather it is considered alteration.<sup>34</sup>

### **The two extreme groups**

There were two groups which adapted the extreme creeds and got misguided, Jahmiya and Mushabbahah. The group of Jahmiya totally rejected the attributes of Allah and misinterpreted the Ayahs. On the other hand, the group of Mushabbahah considered the apparent meaning of these Ayahs and made it their creed. Both of these groups were misguided as you cannot totally reject the attributes of Allah ﷻ, nor can you apply them on their apparent meaning and consider his attributes to be like the ones which resemble creation. In order to be away from this, we had to opt for the way of Taweel (تأويل). Therefore, Ala Hazrat mentions that when the people are told to be away from something, they do the opposite – i.e. go in more depth regarding that same thing. Therefore, it was best to do Taweel (تأويل) of these Ayahs

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid

so that the people do not get caught up in the *Fitna* and they can be away from getting caught up in developing false creeds by taking the apparent meaning of these Ayahs.<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, as we mentioned earlier, if you consider the phrase Istiwa upon the Arsh, you either have to hand over the meaning to Allah ﷻ, you do Taweel (تأويل) which is appropriate for His divine status, such as “possession of it”, or “being higher than the creations in terms of status”. You can neither deny the concept of Istiwa totally, nor can you apply it on the apparent meaning and consider Allah ﷻ to have a body or location معاذ الله.

Thus, following the path on which our guides, Imam Ahmad Raza Khan, the other Ulama, Awliya, and Sahaba traveled on, we will consider the Istiwa to be true, the state of it as unknown, and asking about it as a sinful innovation. May Allah guide those who struggle with their creed. May we get steadfastness on following the teachings of Ala Hazrat which are the teachings of the companions of the beloved Messenger ﷺ that guide us to the straight path. May Allah ﷻ have mercy on Ala Hazrat and forgive us for his sake. Also, may he ﷻ give us the ability to see truth as truth, and false as false without any bias or favoritism.

وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid

تَبَيَّنَ هَذَا الْكَلَامُ

بِتَوْفِيقِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلَّامِ

-الفقيه القادري-

محمد بلال بن صادق العطاري عَفْوَهُ